

**Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council
8 East Long Street, 12th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215**

July 15, 2004

Honorable Commissioners Powell, Abernathy,
Adelstein, Copps, and Martin
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C.

Re: Opposition to Increased Charges on Enhanced Calling Cards

Dear Commission Members:

I am writing on behalf of citizens in Ohio with disabilities who are often the poorest of the poor. I am writing to express opposition to any plans to increase the charges on “enhanced” telephone calling cards.

I have used enhanced calling cards myself and found them to be extremely useful, and I have given them as gifts to my parents who are retired and on a fixed income.

Just two days ago I was made aware that this issue was coming before you for your deliberation. I sent out an email to my mailing list of members of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council and members of the Ohio Olmstead Task Force. I received several emails back that stress how important the continued affordability of this means of communications is for many people with disabilities and for many of our senior citizens.

The affordability of prepaid calling cards is important to the ability of people to stay in contact with their families, friends, and communities. It is important to those who have been injured and are spending time in a rehabilitation facility or nursing home – including members of our armed forces who were injured while serving overseas – and to people who experience brief periods of hospitalization for mental illness, and women who are living temporarily in shelters for battered women. One group home provider also said that the prepaid calling cards are often used as a way to help individuals with a mental disability manage their budget so they don’t overspend on telephone calls.

On behalf of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, I would urge you to oppose any increase in charges on enhanced calling cards for in-state calls.

Sincerely,

David A. Zwyer
Executive Director